

## The Quiet Ones

Guard the quiet ones—  
the son whose pencil  
touches the lines of his letters  
ever so lightly,  
the daughter whose doleful songs  
weave within the ordinary  
language of her speech.

Their hearts do not burn before us,  
nor shine,  
hard and definite  
like children's pointed stars,  
but blur within a smokey broth of sky.

Frugal, quick, their needs  
are hints, whispers  
at the corner of an eye.

They speak without punctuation,  
what they say drops away  
like an interrupted symphony.

Theirs is the faith of seeds,  
seeds that sprout in the night  
bothering our sleep:  
*What was it she wanted to say?*  
*What did he mean?*  
*What must I remember?*

—Marilyn Bushman-Carlton